



## Montgomery County Executive Douglas M. Duncan's Role in the Music Center at Strathmore

Twenty years ago, the Board of Directors of Strathmore began discussions about the need for a larger educational and performance space, developing a plan for the Music Center at Strathmore, an integrated state-of-the-art concert hall and arts education center. However, it wasn't until the mid-1990s, when then-Baltimore Symphony Orchestra (BSO) president John Gidwitz and BSO chairman Buddy Zamoiski approached the County Executive about the possibility of creating a second home in Montgomery County for the BSO, that the plans for the music center were finally put into motion.

Realizing the importance of a world-class music center and its potential to become a cultural centerpiece in the Washington region for decades to come, Duncan began his lobbying efforts with State legislators and Governor Parris Glendening. In fact, Duncan spent so much of his time in Annapolis lobbying for funding for Strathmore, that he was known as "Delegate Duncan." Ultimately, his lobbying efforts paid off and the Governor committed \$1.7 million to be used for the design of the 2,000-seat concert hall.

In March 1998, the State was fully on board and, along with the County Council, committed to paying for half of the costs of the nearly \$100 million music center. Duncan was successful in convincing State and County legislators, as well as the Governor, that this was the right thing to do and the right time to act was now.

In April 2001, ground was finally broken for the new music center. Duncan was joined by the Governor, State Delegates and County Council members, and thanked them for their commitment and support of this project.

Duncan hosted a Gala Dinner in 2003 to welcome the BSO to Montgomery County and to participate in a major donor announcement for the new music center. As proof of their commitment to the project, the private sector stepped up to the plate, and four of the County's most prominent corporations pledged almost \$5 million, making it the largest show of corporate support on record for the county's arts community.

Joining a host of supporters, patrons and State and county elected officials, Duncan will participate in the official ribboncutting and Gala opening ceremonies in February 2005.